

Message Text

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FOR DEP ASST SEC GLEYSTEN ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT NEW DELHI 3771 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO
PEKING HONG KONG COLOMBO DACCA KABUL KATHMANDU ISLAMABAD
MAR 09.
QUOTE UNCLAS NEW DELHI 3771

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, IN, CH

SUBJECT: VAJPAYEE INVITED TO VISIT PRC

REF: NEW DELHI 2248

1. FOREIGN MINISTER VAJPAYEE HAS ACCEPTED "IN PRINCIPLE"
AN INVITATION FROM PRC FOREIGN MINISTER HUANG HUA TO VISIT
PEKING. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS MARCH 9 BASED ON AN
MEA BRIEFING, THE INVITATION WAS CONVEYED ORALLY BY WANG
PING-NAN, LEADER OF THE GOODWILL DELEGATION NOW ON A
TWO-WEEK TOUR OF INDIA, DURING A 90-MINUTE COURTESY CALL
ON VAJPAYEE MARCH 8. THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT VAJPAYEE
HAD BEEN INVITED TO COME "AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME TO BE
ARRANGED THROUGH NORMAL DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS" AND THAT
"THE VISIT COULD TAKE PLACE...AFTER DUE AND CAREFUL
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PREPARATIONS." THE PRESS ACCOUNTS ALSO SAID THAT
ALTHOUGH INDIAN OFFICIALS VIEWED THE INVITATION AS A
"WELCOME DEVELOPMENT", ADEQUATE GROUNDWORK WOULD HAVE
TO BE DONE SO THAT THE VISIT WOULD HAVE "POSITIVE RESULTS"
AND NOT BE JUST A GOODWILL TRIP. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT WAS
NOTED THAT VAJPAYEE HAD TOLD WANG THAT HE WAS AN
"ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE" OF THE PEOPLE AND PUBLIC OPINION

HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. WHEN WANG REPORTEDLY REMARKED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE VISIT WOULD BE A BEGINNING, VAJPAYEE RESPONDED THAT A BEGINNING HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE.

2. REGARDING THE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS DURING THE MEETING, THE MEA SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THERE WAS "GENERAL SATISFACTION" AND THAT WANG AND VAJPAYEE HAD REVIEWED THE SINO-INDIAN EXCHANGES OVER THE YEAR AND ONE HALF AND EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT FURTHER EXCHANGES WOULD TAKE PLACE IN DIVERSE FIELDS. THE SPOKESMAN ADDED THAT THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF CO-EXISTENCE REMAINED VALID AS A BASIS OF THE DISCUSSION OF BILATERAL QUESTIONS AND FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN RELATIONS. ASKED IF THE BORDER DISPUTE HAD BEEN DISCUSSED, MEA "SOURCES" REPORTEDLY SAID THAT SUCH A SUBJECT WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED WITH A NON-OFFICIAL DELEGATION. WANG IS SAID TO HAVE REMARKED THAT HIS DELEGATION HAD TAKEN CHAIRMAN MAO'S 1970 CHARACTERIZATION OF INDIA AS A GREAT COUNTRY WITH WHOM THERE SHOULD BE FRIENDSHIP AS A "DIRECTIVE" AND THAT IT HAD COME TO INDIA "FOR THE PURPOSES OF INCREASING AND DEEPENING FRIENDSHIP." VAJPAYEE REPORTEDLY RESPONDED WITH AN APPROPRIATE QUOTATION FROM MAHATMA GANDHI AND TO HAVE EXPLAINED INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY OF GOOD NEIGHBORLY RELATIONS AND NOT ALLOWING THIRD COUNTRIES TO IMPINGE ON ITS BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. THERE IS PRESS SPECULATION THAT WANG WILL CALL ON
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PRIME MINISTER DESAI AND ALSO EXTEND TO HIM AN INVITATION TO VISIT PEKING. THE MEA SPOKESMAN, HOWEVER, SAID THAT NO APPOINTMENT HAD BEEN ARRANGED. THE "INDIAN EXPRESS" ADDED THAT WANG WAS EXPECTED TO SPEND A WEEK IN NEW DELHI WHILE THE REST OF THE DELEGATION VISITS ELSEWHERE.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE SPOKESMAN'S CAREFUL REMARKS WERE PERSONALLY CLEARED BY FOREIGN SECRETARY MEHTA.
GOHEEN UNQUOTE VANCE

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